LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR CUSTOMER SUCCESS IN THE SALES PROCESS (ILT)

Course Code: **LFCSSP**

Duration: **1 Day (or 2 x virtual half-days)**

Overview

Cisco has forecast that by the year 2020 over 40% of their annual sales will come from recurring software subscriptions. A critical component of this forecast is the license renewals that result from our solutions being fully embedded into our customers' business environment. As a part of this effort, many of Cisco's partners have established a "Customer Success" practice.

Although Customer Success Management is most often viewed as a post-sales activity, ***Customer Success actually begins in the sales process.*** Just like the runners in a relay race, the race cannot be won without all the runners contributing to the same successful outcome.

Sales is the first leg of the race, and it is during this stage that we need to gain "strategic awareness" of where the customer is headed and where and how Cisco's solutions will enable them to consistently achieve their measurable desired outcomes.

By equipping Account Managers (AMs) with the skills to engage with business stakeholders, they are better able to position Cisco's solutions as critical components of their strategic roadmap. It will also enable them to translate their customers' current and future needs into measurable business outcomes that later become the scorecard for customer success.

Customers will often not buy or implement new solutions because they do not fully understand where and how our solutions will fit into their existing processes and/or how their business processes will be changed or replaced. It is also during the sales process that we need to mitigate the perceived "risk of change" as a key competitive differentiator.

Pre-Requisites

- None

Objectives

At the end of this one-day, account-based workshop participants will:
- be able to identify where their customers are currently investing resources and how to align with their initiatives and desired outcomes.
- have the skills to gain access to business stakeholders to position Cisco's solutions as critical components of their "strategic roadmap".
- gain agreement from business stakeholders to engage in the process of discovery and implementation of Cisco's solutions.
- be able mitigate the perceived "risk of change" by engaging with business process owners.
- know how to create demand for Cisco's software by engaging in a "business outcomes" conversation with business stakeholders.

Target Audience

Account Managers, Intermediate to Seasoned

Content Overview

MODULE I - THE NEW DEFINITION FOR "SUCCESS"
Moving from selling hardware to selling software has changed the definition of "success". When selling hardware, we achieved success by booking and delivering the hardware to customer's site. When selling software, success is not achieved until the solution is embedded into the customer's business environment and generating recurring revenue. It is also at the "embed" stage that our solutions are able to successfully survive competitive threats of replacement. The purpose of this module is to show how this change effects the sales process, including who we sell to, how we sell and the importance of looking beyond today's requirements.

Team Exercise: (Case Study)
Each team is assigned a case study and tasked with identifying the measurable business outcomes this customer is pursuing.

MODULE II - THE VALUE OF "STRATEGIC AWARENESS"
Strategic awareness is one of the most important skills an AM can possess when selling software. Whereas hardware is most often purchased to address the customer's foreseeable needs (near term). Cisco's software is designed to deliver the agility and scale needed to address the customer's ever-changing long-term requirements.

Being aware of your customer's long-term strategy and the environmental factors (i.e. regulatory, competitive, customer expectations…) that can change or influence their strategy will enable you to better position the agility and scale of Cisco's software as critically required to support their strategic roadmap.

Team Exercise: (Case Study)
Each team is assigned a case study and tasked with the following:
• Identify the long-term strategy of this company.
• The environmental factors that can change or effect their strategy.
• How will Cisco's software uniquely enable them to execute on their strategy long term.

MODULE III - ALIGNING WITH THE CUSTOMER'S INITIATIVES AND OBJECTIVES
Sir Isaac Newton's first law of motion simply states that "An object at rest stays at rest and an object in motion stays in motion".

Since selling software requires we sell in the context of change it is necessary to identify our customer's current initiatives of change. The purpose of this module is to equip sellers with the skills to identify their customers' current initiatives, the measurable business outcomes they are trying to achieve and the stakeholders responsible for these outcomes.

Individual Exercise: (Account Research)
Each participant is tasked with researching one of their accounts to uncover their current initiatives and the outcomes they are trying to achieve.

MODULE IV - GAINING ACCESS TO THE CRITICAL STAKEHOLDERS
With an increased number of software decisions being made by business stakeholders, it is imperative that AMs gain access to these important stakeholders. It is also important that these stakeholders be engaged in the process of embedding these solutions into their business environment. The purpose of this module is to equip participants with the skills to create messaging that resonates with the targeted stakeholders in order to gain access to them even when IT may be blocking your access.

Individual Exercise: "Crafting your Approach"
Participants are tasked with crafting their approach to gain access to the business stakeholder responsible for the initiative they discovered (in the previous exercise) within their account.

MODULE V - ENGAGING IN A "BUSINESS OUTCOMES" CONVERSATION WITH THE BUSINESS STAKEHOLDERS
The purpose of this module is to equip participants with the skills to engage in a business outcomes conversation with business stakeholders with which they can effectively articulate the value of Cisco's annuity software as a means of achieving their desired business outcomes over time.

Individual Exercise: (Role Play)
Selected participants will engage in a role play exercise with a selected stakeholder in their account.